

# NEVADA Connections

*Produced by Community College Southern Nevada to connect resources for Nevada's adult workforce*

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## Nevada programs participate in innovative adult education survey

The U.S. Department of Education is conducting several major literacy studies in 2002-2003. One of these, the International Survey of Adults (ISA), includes a ground-breaking survey of adult education — the Adult Education Program Study (AEPS).

The ISA involves the U.S. and up to 15 other countries and will measure competency in skills that are important to economic and social success around the world. All ISA participating countries will measure the literacy skills of the general adult population living in households by using reading and writing exercises. Additionally in the United States, the AEPS will also measure the literacy skills of adults enrolled in state and federally funded adult education programs. This will allow policymakers to compare the performance of adult populations with those of other industrialized countries.

The AEPS has two parts, a program component and a learner component. The program component began in the fall with about 1,500 programs from 50 states and the District of Columbia. All nine of

Nevada's AEFLA-funded programs were asked to participate. Programs will complete a questionnaire covering topics such as services offered, funding sources, assessments used, available technology and other issues. The program component will provide the first comprehensive information in 10 years on the characteristics of adult education programs and give policymakers and educators valuable data for decision making.

The AEPS learner component, conducted in the spring of 2003, will assess a nationally representative sample of approximately 5,000 adult education students from 200 programs throughout the country. ABE programs at CCSN, HABLE, and Lahontan Valley Literacy Volunteers have been selected to participate. Students will be assessed using reading and writing exercises similar to those used with the ISA household adult participants. The learner component will provide, for the first time ever, a comparison of the literacy skills of those individuals enrolled in adult education programs and the general population.

## NAEA recognizes outstanding teacher and student

The Nevada Adult Education Association (NAEA) recently recognized Tawny Alexander (at right) and Kathleen Webb as teacher and student of the year. Tawny notes that she's learned as much as her students during her four years of teaching adults at JOIN in Winnemucca. "I cherish each student that walks through our doors," she said, "because the challenges students present challenge me to be creative in helping them reach their goals."

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## Let's GET REAL!

How can I evaluate which software is best for my program?

If you've tried to find software or Web sites for yourself or your students, you've likely spent significant time searching. There are many resources available ... but which are the best for what you want to accomplish? Assessing what you find can also be time-consuming. There are numerous sites that provide guidelines on evaluating, but poring through those guidelines can also chew up

precious time.

Get Real (Guidelines for Evaluating Technology Resources for Electronic Adult Literacy) was funded through Nevada's ABE Leadership funds and developed by Researcher Margaret Patterson ([margaretbpatterson@yahoo.com](mailto:margaretbpatterson@yahoo.com)). Her goal was to identify a way to quickly evaluate technology resources for adult educators. She did thorough qualitative and quantitative analyses of existing evaluation tools and created two frameworks — one for software and one for Web sites. Her system makes it easy for you to assign numerical values to key criteria, allowing you to quickly analyze and compare products.

But wait ... there's more!

The GET REAL site ([www.literacynet.org/nevada/getreal](http://www.literacynet.org/nevada/getreal)) also includes an online tutorial for program administrators and instructional staff. The self-paced, interactive exercises walk you through the process of evaluating software and Web sites for adult education. The tutorial may also be used as a group project for professional development.

Although the primary purpose of GET REAL is to help you quickly evaluate resources, the site also includes links to specific software and Web sites. These links were selected from high quality sources, such as the Literacy Assistance Center of New York, National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), ERIC, etc., and from recommendations from Nevada's adult educators.

How can I determine which websites will best serve my students?

### ESL Impact program offers free resources

Several name brand products sponsor this program for ESL teachers of adult beginning and intermediate ESL students. Teachers may receive gift packs, posters, product usage guides, and workbooks — all free of charge. Contact Joanna Stovall, 888/788-5920, ext. 113 or email [asha.gregory@eurorscg.com](mailto:asha.gregory@eurorscg.com).

### CASAS announces Web site upgrade

CASAS has updated their Web site ([www.casas.org](http://www.casas.org)) with a focus on an information-rich home page and quicker access to information. A TOPSpro Forum where users can ask questions is also available.

### NAEA recognizes outstanding performance *(Continued from page 1)*



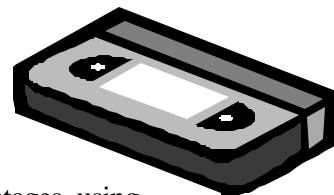
Tawny is especially proud of her work with Kathleen Webb (shown at left), who received NAEA's Student of the Year award. Married and with children by the time she was 17 and having seen her daughter through nursing school, Kathleen overcame her nervousness and signed up (along with her son) with JOIN early this year. Within six months she earned her GED and her Adult Diploma and completed a college course in History of World Religions.

"The goal of JOIN (Job Opportunities in Nevada) is to help students become competitively employable in a short period of time," said Manager Jackie Kearns. "JOIN, Inc. partners with the Humboldt County GED/Adult Diploma program which makes the offering of services in the contexts of job

training and education a very compact experience for a student."

JOIN treats students as though they were employees, which helps them develop excellent work habits and ethics. Kathleen might characterize JOIN's staff as considerate and kind as well. "I was treated with a great deal of respect and dignity," she said. "Tawny and the other staff members were always there to answer my questions and offer encouragement. My success is theirs!"

## TV411 series online and at SLRC



The Emmy Award-winning TV411 series, produced by the Adult Literacy Media Alliance (ALMA), is comprised of 20 tapes designed to teach life and literacy skills with an emphasis on health, parenting, people, and money. Subjects include reading comprehension, research techniques, writing to others, filling out forms, calculating percentages, using fractions, test-taking, etc. The lessons have recently been cross-walked to the 16 EFF Content Standards.

Each half-hour episode consists of several segments hosted by both fictional and real-life personalities. For example, Dennis Franz from *NYPD Blue* explains how to read a newspaper article; a WNBA star and new Mom offers advice on time management; famous authors share their love of reading and writing in an Oprah-inspired book club series; and a cast of entertaining TV411 characters walk students through everyday math and literacy topics. Adult learners tell their stories of how they acquired the literacy skills to become better parents, employees, and lifelong learners.

A guide (by subject and by tape) and the tapes themselves are available for checkout from the State Literacy Resource Center, 800/445-9673. Or, you may use the Internet by following the instructions provided by Susan Graf, SLRC Literacy Coordinator:

Go to [www.clan.lib.nv.us](http://www.clan.lib.nv.us) to access the SLRC's automated database. In the upper right portion of the screen you will see a search box with the word CLAN; press the down arrow and select NEVADA LITERACY COALITION. Then enter TV411 in the "Quick Library Search" box and press GO. You will see a list of all of the TV411 episodes available for your use. (The index is the last item in the list.)

"Check with your local library for instructions on Inter-Library Loan (ILL), which will enable you to pick up your materials at your local library," added Susan. There is no cost for shipping!

ALMA recently created an online extension of the TV411 curriculum at [www.tv411.org](http://www.tv411.org) that features more than 50 interactive lessons and articles geared to pre-GED students. There is also a bulletin board that provides users with personalized support and a forum to share their writing and ideas.

## Other states share Nevada's focus on quality training and evaluation

ABE Leadership funds are providing in-depth training on a variety of topics throughout the year. In order to provide meaningful staff development that gets implemented in the classroom, successful completion of each workshop requires that each participant complete a take-home activity within a month after the workshop. A recent article in *The Buzz*, Pennsylvania's newsletter for adult educators, describes how the Northwest Professional Development Center is following up on training. "The best change we have made," wrote Joy Zamierowski, "is following up on [more thorough] evaluations with phone calls and e-mails about a month after the event." Practitioners appreciate the contact and have suggested that another contact be made, perhaps six months later. They also indicated that they would like to see follow-up trainings that measure how the material presented at the training was utilized in the classroom.

Upcoming trainings are listed below. ALL adult educators are welcome to attend, on a space available basis. Contact the appropriate host to reserve a seat!

<u>Title/date/place</u>	<u>Host (contact)</u>	<u>Presenter and objectives</u>
ESL 101 Part I 1/11/03 Sparks	Vicki Newell Northern Nevada Literacy Coalition 775/356-1007 <a href="mailto:director@nnlc.org">director@nnlc.org</a>	Maxine Frauman-Prickel. Define the basic elements that contribute to language acquisition. Identify classroom strategies for developing listening and speaking skills in adult ESL students. Describe cooperative-learning structures that foster language acquisition.
Cooperative Learning 1/25/03 Las Vegas	Lyn Pizor Catholic Charities 702/693-6761 <a href="mailto:lynpizor@yahoo.com">lynpizor@yahoo.com</a>	Sally Scott. Learn the difference between cooperative learning and group working. Understand the rationale for using cooperative learning. Integrate cooperative learning into lesson plans
ESL 101 Part II 2/8/03 Las Vegas	CCSN (8-5): Sheila Fairbairn 702/651-4896 <a href="mailto:sheila_Fairbairn@ccsn.nevada.edu">sheila_Fairbairn@ccsn.nevada.edu</a> (Noon-9): Judy Barron 702/651-4266 <a href="mailto:judy_barron@ccsn.nevada.edu">judy_barron@ccsn.nevada.edu</a>	Maxine Frauman-Prickel. Define the basic elements that contribute to language acquisition. Identify classroom strategies for developing reading and writing skills for beginning and intermediate adult ESL students. Describe cooperative learning structures that foster reading and writing in a second language.

## *Connecting resources for Nevada's adult workforce*

### Focus on families

#### Reading is up

According to data gathered for the 2002 report *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being*, 58 percent of preschoolers had a family member read to them every day last year. This is an increase of four percent from 1999. For more information visit <http://www.childstats.gov>.

#### Tips for recruiting parents

The July 2002 issue of *Connecting the World of Family Literacy*, published by the Family Literacy Alliance, printed these tips for recruiting parents into family literacy programs:



Get fathers involved. We are currently trying to promote the Texas Agriculture Extension Agency's FRED Program that was developed by Texas A&M. The FRED Program is Fathers Reading Every Day. When it was introduced at a campus, the response by fathers was overwhelming. The Dad's Club at one of our elementary schools received a state award for the volunteer services conducted by the fathers. For example, one dentist/Dad conducted free dental checkups for the children at his child's school and for other Title I schools

as well. —Karen J. Jennings, Fort Bend ISD Title I, Sugar Land TX



Participate in parades with a family literacy program float and pass out health related items (toothbrushes) with a tag on the wrap with your name and phone number. —Melba E. White Head Start of Muskegon/Ocean County, Muskegon, MI



Remember that people often don't participate in family literacy programs because they have never received a personal invitation from someone they knew, liked and trusted. —Jose L. Cruz, California Literacy-San Diego, CA.